

Advice and support during COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

With the COVID-19 pandemic, you might be finding things harder than usual at the moment. You are not alone, and help is available.

Southwark Council Public Health Division
Last updated 02 June 2020

Sources of Support for Local Residents

Connect more, by spending time with others

Loneliness has a big impact on our mental health. Connecting with others might feel extra hard right now, but it is important to stay in contact with friends and family.

- Arrange phone calls or send instant messages or texts. If you're worried that you might run out of things to talk about, make a plan with someone to watch a TV programme or read a book separately so that you can discuss it when you contact each other.
- Think about things you can do to connect with people. For example, putting extra pictures up of the people you care about might be a nice reminder of the people in your life.
- Listen to a chatty radio station or podcast if your home feels too quiet.

The Samaritans offer a friendly chat. You can call them on **116 123**, or chat online on their website (www.samaritans.org). Age UK also offer an advice line and a friendly chat if you are feeling lonely on **0800 678 1602**. Lines are open 8am to 7pm, everyday.

Feeling scared or worried?

This is a normal when things are so stressful. Try to talk about your worries and find ways to keep active and busy with new hobbies.

Keeping active

Being physically active can improve your mental health, and being active outdoors is even better. Parks and open spaces in Southwark are still open - just remember to follow social distancing rules. Or if you want to stay inside, check out Sport England's #stayinworkout online physical activities. For more information call the Healthy Lifestyles Hub on 0333 005 0159.

Eating well

Good food is important for all of us, and helps to keep our mind healthy. If you or someone you know is struggling to access food as they can't leave the house due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), and friends, family or neighbours cannot help, please contact Southwark Council's Community Hub on 0207 525 5000 and choose option 3, or email covidsupport@southwark.gov.uk.

Feeling bored?

Go to www.southwark.gov.uk/libraries to find free e-books, films and ideas for things to do at home.

Money worries?

If you are worried about money or bills visit the council's website to find out how to get help. Search 'financial support for Southwark residents' to find the webpage.

Managing conflict

Staying at home with people all day can mean it's easier to get into arguments. Remove yourself from situations when they get heated and try to stay calm. If you're worried about domestic abuse please call SOLACE advocacy and support service on 020 7593 1290, email

sass.southwark@solacewomensaid.cjsm.net or visit www.solacewomensaid.org

Housing concerns?

Southwark Council's Housing Solutions Team can help with any housing or homelessness issues. Email housing.options@southwark.gov.uk or call 020 7525 5000 (open 7 days per week including out of hours for emergencies only). If you are a council resident you can also contact your Resident Services Officer.

Caring for someone?

Carers UK has helpful advice and information about the support you can get during the coronavirus pandemic. Contact them on 0808 808 7777 from Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm.

For more advice visit:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Bereavement

Losing loved ones is always difficult and it's normal to experience feelings of grief. National organisation Cruse (**0808 808 1677**) has a bereavement helpline and The Good Grief Trust website can help you to find other special services, such as help for those who have lost a child. Visit www.thegoodgrieftrust.org

If you need extra help and support

If you are feeling overwhelmed or need extra help, it's important to know that support is available.

- **Southwark Wellbeing Hub:** The Hub can help you find the right support for you. You can call the Hub on **020 3751 9684** or **07849 084368** or send them an email at southwarkhub@together-uk.org Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. You can also visit their [website](#).
- Your GP is still here to support you and can provide advice on how to deal with your symptoms and talk about available treatment. GPs have put measures in place so that you can be seen safely. Call your local practice to hear more
- Southwark NHS provides a Talking Therapy service to support people struggling with low mood, stress and anxiety. You can contact them directly on **020 3228 2194**, but you must be registered with a GP in Southwark to access the service

- The Samaritans offer a friendly chat. You can call them on **116 123**, or chat online on their website (www.samaritans.org)
- The [Big White Wall](http://www.bigwhitewall.com) is free and available to all Southwark residents aged 16+ and provides 24/7 support. Simply go to www.bigwhitewall.com and enter your Southwark postcode when prompted.

If you are in a mental health crisis

Southwark's NHS 24-hour mental health telephone support line is available for people who are experiencing mental distress in Southwark on **0800 731 2864**.

In an emergency always call 999

For young people

- The Nest is a new service for all young people in Southwark seeking free, confidential support for feelings like stress, anxiety, worry, or if you just want a chat. You can call the team at 020 8138 1805 or go to www.thenestsouthwark.org.uk
- If you are feeling worried, anxious or stressed, you can text "Shout" to 85258 to chat with trained volunteers. This service is active 24/7 and you can get information at www.giveusashout.org
- [Kooth](http://www.kooth.com) is a new online counselling service for children and young people aged 11 to 25 years old to get free, anonymous mental health and emotional wellbeing support: www.kooth.com